

ERDC launches Center for the Application of Sustainable Innovations

By William D. Goran

The Army has committed to a innovative and comprehensive new strategy for the environment – *Sustain the Mission, Secure the Future*. Endorsed by the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff, this strategy provides “a long range vision that enables the Army to meet its mission today and into the future”. At the heart of this vision is the notion of sustainability and the triple bottom line which links the Army **mission**, stakeholders in Army activities and facilities (**community**) and the **environment**. This Army strategy is consistent with similar strategies, guidance and initiatives at the Department of Defense and Federal levels.

To help achieve these ambitious Army and Defense strategies, the Army Corps of Engineers Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) created a new Center, hosted at the ERDC laboratory (Construction Engineering Research Lab –CERL) in Champaign, Ill. This Center for the Application of Sustainable Innovations (CASI) will function as a hub of a network, linking expertise in ERDC with numerous Center partners, to include the Center for Sustainable Design at the University of Illinois, the National Defense Center for Environmental Excellence, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the Corps of Engineers Huntsville Installation Center of Expertise, and many others.

Center functions

Providing Expertise in Sustainable Planning and Design: Expertise, databases, knowledge and analysis tools will be applied to help the Army and Department of Defense achieve and enhance sustainable approaches to regional and master planning, facility design, and facility operation, maintenance and deconstruction. Capabilities will include formal and informal demonstrations; expertise to provide planning and design guidance; and web assets to link with a community of experts, consult databases, and interact with smart “lessons learned” environments. CASI will also assist Army and Defense in measuring progress towards achieving sustainable planning and design goals – such as reduced energy consumption, reduced life-cycle costs, improvements in planning efficiencies, and improvements in stakeholder engagement and satisfaction.

Facilitating Sustainable Strategy Implementation: CASI will provide direct assistance to Army and Defense organizations as they plan to implement sustainable strategies. Assistance will include systems and materials analysis across the triple bottom line, lean six sigma analysis, action plans, metrics and monitoring progress.

Providing a Sustainable Knowledge Environment: Individuals, communities of practice, and diverse organizations will need knowledge assets to foster a learning sustainability ethic and practice. The Center and partners will provide capabilities for collaboration, learning and analysis tools, databases, and the transfer of sustainability technologies.

Customer and Partner Engagement

Board of Advisors: To ensure the Center targets capabilities that most effectively serve Army and Defense users, a stakeholder “board” composed of Army, other services and Defense personnel, will guide Center plans, review Center activities and progress, help

secure resources, and help target services to key objectives. The Center Director, and the Center partners forum Chair will regularly report to this board.

Partners Forum: This forum will help ensure that the Center provide the most innovative and effective capabilities to Army, other services and Defense, and that activities are fully coordinated across the Center provider network, and that partnership arrangements are clear and well coordinated.

Director and Point of Contact: The initial director for the Center will be Mr. William D. Goran, 217-373-6735, or email william.d.goran@erdc.usace.army.mil .

William D. Goran serves as CERL Technical Director and Strategic Program Planner in addition to his role as Director of CASI in Champaign, Ill.